

involve the judiciary in disagreement over other matters, but they chose to act otherwise.

I would hope that the Senate would move to confirm these four additional judges on its calendar without further delay this week. Three of them had their confirmation hearing back in early May and have been on the Senate calendar without action for more than 6 weeks. The other had a confirmation hearing back in March, and was reported for a second time almost 1 month ago.

The Republican leadership chose to single out only one judicial nominee for a unanimous consent request and approval before the most recent recess. Over the break I took the trouble to review the record on that nominee to see whether it held a clue regarding why that particular nominee, as opposed to the other qualified nominees, had been singled out for special attention.

Nominated by the President on February 12 of this year, Alan Gold is set to fill a vacancy that was created on the District Court for the Southern District of Florida on November 30, 1996, when Judge Gonzalez took senior status. His is the only vacancy remaining on that Court and it has existed for less than 7 months. He was included in a confirmation hearing on May 7 and reported by the Judiciary Committee 2 weeks later.

As I have said before, it should not take more than 4 months to consider a judicial nominee and the Gold nomination and its treatment should serve as the standard by which we measure the Senate's treatment of other nominees. Although it should represent the normal process, it is the exception this year.

He has a commendable background but so do the other nominees for judicial appointment. In reviewing the file, I see that Judge Gold was rated well qualified by the ABA. Given Senator HATCH's speech condemning the influence of the ABA and its ratings in our confirmation process, I doubt that explains his prompt confirmation. Eric Clay was also rated well qualified for his Sixth Circuit nomination and he was held back on the calendar. William Fletcher, James Beatty, Margaret McKeown, Marjorie Rendell, Richard Lazzara, Margaret Morrow and others have likewise received the ABA's highest rating and have not seen their nominations expedited.

In reviewing his confirmation hearing and the answers to the written questions that followed, I see that he singled out for criticism the case of *Griswold versus Connecticut*, which affirmed a privacy right guaranteed by the Constitution, and listed as the book that has most influenced his view of the law "The Tempting of America" by Robert Bork. My fear is that this confirmation reflects a litmus test being imposed by the Republican majority and that is why they singled out this nomination for expedited treatment. I hope that is not so.

I hope that nominees are not being forced to swear allegiance to Robert Bork instead of the Constitution of the United States in order to be confirmed. I hope that a nominee can uphold the important privacy rights that the Supreme Court has recognized to be constitutionally based and still be confirmed. I would like to believe that there is a neutral, alternative explanation for the treatment of this nomination relative to the others and that no Senator is imposing an ideological litmus test on judicial nominations.

#### THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Wednesday, July 9, 1997, the Federal debt stood at \$5,359,038,067,462.61. (Five trillion, three hundred fifty-nine billion, thirty-eight million, sixty-seven thousand, four hundred sixty-two dollars and sixty-one cents)

One year ago, July 9, 1996, the Federal debt stood at \$5,151,107,000,000. (Five trillion, one hundred fifty-one billion, one hundred seven million)

Five years ago, July 9, 1992, the Federal debt stood at \$3,972,301,000,000. (Three trillion, nine hundred seventy-two billion, three hundred one million)

Ten years ago, July 9, 1987, the Federal debt stood at \$2,320,130,000,000. (Two trillion, three hundred twenty billion, one hundred thirty million)

Fifteen years ago, July 9, 1982, the Federal debt stood at \$1,077,779,000,000. (One trillion, seventy-seven billion, seven hundred seventy-nine million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$4 trillion—\$4,281,259,067,462.61 (Four trillion, two hundred eighty-one billion, two hundred fifty-nine million, sixty-seven thousand, four hundred sixty-two dollars and sixty-one cents) during the past 15 years.

#### HONORING THE LANCASTERS ON THEIR 37TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, families are the cornerstone of America. The data are undeniable: Individuals from strong families contribute to the society. In an era when nearly half of all couples married today will see their union dissolve into divorce, I believe it is both instructive and important to honor those who have taken the commitment of "till death us do part" seriously, demonstrating successfully the timeless principles of love, honor, and fidelity. These characteristics make our country strong.

For these important reasons, I rise today to honor Janice and Bill Lancaster of Grandview, MO, who on July 23, 1997, will celebrate their 37th wedding anniversary. My wife, Janet, and I look forward to the day we can celebrate a similar milestone. The Lancasters' commitment to the principles and values of their marriage deserves to be saluted and recognized.

#### RETIREMENT OF BRIGADIER GENERAL DAVID "BULL" E. BAKER, USAF

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, "Patriot" is a word best grasped through example: a life lived or service rendered in defense of our country's interests and values. I rise today to recognize an Air Force officer whose service to this nation offers us a splendid example of patriotism.

Brigadier General David "Bull" E. Baker will soon retire from the U.S. Air Force. Duty and sacrifice have been the standards of an exemplary career that has bridged our Nation's most recent conflicts. Bull Baker flew for his country in the skies over Southeast Asia, northern Europe and Iraq. Over Cambodia his OV-2A was shot down and he was held a prisoner of war by the Viet Cong. In February 1973, General Baker became the only United States Air Force prisoner repatriated from Cambodia.

By all accounts, Bull Baker is an exceptional pilot. He was one of the first F-15 Eagle pilots as well as the flight commander for the Air Force's first female jet pilots. During Operation Desert Storm, General Baker flew 21 combat missions in the F-15E Strike Eagle.

This experience as a pilot and a commander has helped him excel in his current position. As the National Reconnaissance Office's Deputy Director for Military Support, General Baker ensures that our intelligence satellites are there to support military commanders. Some 4,000 flying hours and the force of his personality have proven far more formidable than any bureaucratic obstacle, and he has been able to provide our warfighters a unilateral advantage through timely, critical intelligence. Our military forces' ability to successfully execute complex, simultaneous operations from Bosnia, to the Middle East, and to the west coast of Africa is a testament to General Baker's ability and dedication.

In Bull Baker's career and accomplishments, a word overshadows a thousand pictures. He has placed integrity first, offered service before self, and excelled in all he was called to do. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing a patriot.

#### MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

#### EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting a treaty and sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)